CHAPTER 1

Overview

Ethnicity and Family Therapy

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> The future of our earth may depend on the ability of all [of us] to identify and develop new . . . patterns of relating across difference.
>
> —LORDE (1992, p. 502)

> What would it be like to have not only color vision but culture vision, the ability to see the multiple worlds of others?
>
> —BATESON (1995, p. 53)

Cultural identity has a profound impact on our sense of well-being within our society and on our mental and physical health. Our cultural background refers to our ethnicity, but it is also profoundly influenced by social class, religion, migration, geography, gender socialization, racism, and sexual orientation, as well as by family dynamics. All these factors influence people's social location in our society—their access to resources, their inclusion in dominant definitions of "belonging," and the extent to which they will be privileged or oppressed within the larger society. These factors also influence how family members relate to their cultural heritage, to others of their cultural group, and to preserving cultural traditions. Furthermore, we live in a society in which our high rates of cultural intermarriage mean that citizens of the United States increasingly reflect multiple cultural backgrounds. Nevertheless, because of our society's political, economic, and social dynamics, our country is still highly segregated; we tend to live in communities segregated communities by race, culture, and class, which also have a profound influence on our sense of ethnic identity.

It is now more than two decades since the first edition of *Ethnicity and Family Therapy* was published; in these decades our awareness of cultural diversity in our society and

world has changed profoundly. We have witnessed amazing attempts at transforming ethnic group relationships in South Africa, Northern Ireland, the Middle East, and the former Soviet Union, as well as tragic ethnic devastation in the Sudan, Rwanda, Kosovo, Russia, the Middle East, and Latin America. Meanwhile, the United States is being transformed by rapidly changing demographics and has played a most ethnocentric role in going to war in Iraq. This is a role it has unfortunately played in many other regions at other times, most especially in Central and South America, in some of the Caribbean island nations, the Phillipines, and Vietnam (see Chapters 11–19, 23, and 27).

THE MEANING OF ETHNICITY

> Why have we as a people been able to continue to exist? Because we know where we come from. By having roots, you can see the direction in which you want to go.
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> —JOENIA BATISTE DE CARVAHLO, first Indian woman lawyer in Brazil, who is fighting for the rights of her people.
> (*New York Times*, November 13, 2004, p. 7)

Having a sense of belonging, of historical continuity, and of identity with one's own people is a basic psychological need. Ethnicity, the concept of a group's "peoplehood," refers to a group's commonality of ancestry and history, through which people have evolved shared values and customs over the centuries. Based on a combination of race, religion, and cultural history, ethnicity is retained, whether or not members realize their commonalities with one another. Its values are transmitted over generations by the family and reinforced by the surrounding community. It is a powerful influence in determining identity. It patterns our thinking, feeling, and behavior in both obvious and subtle ways, although generally we are not aware of it. It plays a major role in determining how we eat, work, celebrate, make love, and die.

The subject of ethnicity tends to evoke deep feelings, and discussion frequently becomes polarized or judgmental. As Greeley (1969) has described it, using presumed common origin to define "we" and "they" seems to touch on something basic and primordial in the human psyche. Irving Levine (personal communication, February 15, 1981) observed: "Ethnicity can be equated along with sex and death as a subject that touches off deep unconscious feelings in most people." When there has been discussion of ethnicity, it has tended to focus on nondominant groups' "otherness," emphasizing their deficits, rather than their adaptive strengths or their place in the larger society, and how so-called "minorities" differ from the "dominant" societal definitions of "normality."

Our approach is to emphasize instead that ethnicity pertains to everyone, and influences everyone's values, not only those who are at the margins of this society. From this perspective cultural understanding requires examining everyone's ethnic assumptions. No one stands outside the category of ethnicity, because everyone has a cultural background that influences his or her values and behavior.

Those born White, who conform to the dominant societal norms, probably grew up believing that "ethnicity" referred to others who were different from them. Whites were the definition of "regular." As Tataki (1993, 2002) has pointed out, we have always tended to view Americans as European in ancestry. We will not be culturally competent until we let go of that myth. Many in our country are left with a sense of cultural homelessness because their heritage is not acknowledged within our society.

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Our very definitions of human development are ethnoculturally based. Eastern cultures tend to define the person as a social being and categorize development by growth in the human capacity for empathy and connection. Many Western cultures, in contrast, begin by positing the individual as a psychological being and define development as growth in the capacity for autonomous functioning. Even the definitions "Eastern" and "Western," as well as our world maps (Kaiser, 2001), reflect an ethnocentric view of the universe with Britain and the United States as the center.

African Americans (see Chapter 6; Boyd-Franklin, 2003; Carter, 1995; Franklin, 2004) have a very different foundation for their sense of identity, expressed as a communal sense of "We are, therefore I am," contrasting starkly with the individualistic European ideal: "I think, therefore I am." In the United States, the dominant cultural assumptions have generally been derived from a few European cultures, primarily German (Chapter 40), Dutch (Chapter 38), and, above all, British (Chapter 37), which are taken to be the universal standard. The values of these few European groups have tended to be viewed as "normal," and values derived from other cultures have tended to be viewed as "ethnic." These other values have tended to be marginalized, even though they reflect the traditional values of the majority of the population.

Although human behavior results from intrapsychic, interpersonal, familial, socioeconomic, and cultural forces, the mental health field has paid greatest attention to the first of these—the personality factors that shape life experiences and behavior. DSM-IV, although for the first time considering culture in assessing and treating patients, allows one to conduct the entire course of diagnosis and therapy with no thought of the patient's culture at all. Much of the authors' work on culture was omitted from the published manual, and the "culture-bound" syndromes they did mention tended to "exoticize the role of culture" (Lopez & Guarnaccia, 2000). Indeed, the authors decided to exclude disorders seen as primarily North American disorders (anorexia nervosa and chronic fatigue syndrome) from the glossary of culture-bound syndromes because they wanted to restrict the term to problems of "ethnic minorities" (Lopez & Guarnaccia, 2000)!

As things stand now, most mental health record-keeping systems do not even record patients' ethnic backgrounds, settling for minimal reference to race as the only background marker. No other reference is generally made to immigration or heritage. In the broader mental health field, there was a great increase in attention paid to ethnicity in the 1980s. However, since then there has been a distinct retreat from attention to culture as managed care, pharmaceutical, and insurance companies took control of most mental health services and intentionally minimized attention to family, context, and even service for those who cannot afford to pay. Since the early 1990s, the mental health professions in general pay only lip service to the importance of cultural competence. The study of cultural influences on human emotional functioning has been left primarily to the cultural anthropologists. Yet they have preferred to explore remote cultural enclaves, rather than examining culture within our own diverse society.

Even mental health professionals who have considered culture have often been more interested in examining international, cross-cultural comparisons than in studying the ethnic groups within our own society. Our therapeutic models are generally presented as having universal applicability. Only recently have we begun to consider the underlying cultural assumptions of our therapeutic models and of ourselves as therapists. And even now, reference to "cultural competence" varies from complete acceptance to outright derision (Betancourt, 2004).

We must incorporate cultural acknowledgment into our theories and into our therapies, so that clients not of the dominant culture will not have to feel lost, displaced, or mystified. Working toward multicultural frameworks in our theories, research, and clinical practice requires that we challenge our society's dominant universalist assumptions, as we must challenge our other societal institutions as well in order for democracy to survive (Dilworth-Anderson, Burton, & Johnson, 1993; Hitchcock, 2003; Pinderhughes, 1989).

It is unfortunate that society's rules have made it difficult for us to focus our vision on ourselves in this way, but it is essential if we are to become culturally effective clinicians. As Bernard Lewis (2002) has put it:

> When things go wrong in our society, our response is usually to place the blame on external or domestic scapegoats—foreigners abroad or minorities at home. We might ask a different question: What did we do wrong? (pp. 22–23)

This question, which leads us to look in every situation to see what we contribute to misunderstandings, is essential to expanding our cultural awareness. We must understand where we have been and the cultural assumptions and blinders our own history has given us before we can begin to understand those who are culturally different from us.

This book presents a kind of "road map" for understanding families in relation to their ethnic heritage. The paradigms here are not presented as "truth," but rather as maps to some aspects of the terrain, intended as a guide for the explorer seeking a path. They draw on historical traits, residues of which linger in the psyche of families many generations after immigration, long after its members have become outwardly "Americanized" and cease to identify with their ethnic backgrounds. Although families are changing very rapidly in today's world, our focus here is on the continuities, the ways in which families retain the cultural characteristics of their heritage, often without even noticing these patterns. Of course, the clinical suggestions offered by the authors of this book will not be relevant in every case, but they will, it is hoped, expand the readers' ways of thinking about their own clinical assumptions and the thinking of the families with whom they work. Space limitations have made it necessary for us to emphasize characteristics that may be problematic. Thus, we do not always present families in their best light. We are well aware that this can lead to misunderstandings and feed negative stereotypes. We trust the reader to take the information in the spirit in which it is meant—not to limit our thinking, but to expand it.

There has been a growing realization since this book's first edition that a positive sense of ethnic and racial identity is essential for developing a healthy personal and group identity, and for effective clinical practice. So far, more in the field of health care than in mental health, the concept of "cultural competence" has begun to become an accepted value. In recognition of the overwhelming evidence of racial and ethnic disparities in health care, there is a beginning acknowledgment that with every illness and on virtually every measure of functioning, the cultural disparities in health care are staggering and it is time to rethink our cultural attitudes and to address these realities. A new field of "cultural competence" in health care has been emerging, a field that defines the "culturally competent health care system" as one that acknowledges the importance of culture throughout the system and is vigilant in dealing with the dynamics that result from cultural differences, the expansion of cultural knowledge, and the adaptation of services to meet culturally unique needs (Betancourt, Green, Carrillo, & Ananeh-Firempong, 2003).

This field of culturally competent health care seeks to identify sociocultural barriers to health care and to address them at every level of the system, including the cultural congruity of the interventions provided and the degree to which the leadership and workforce reflect the diversity of the general population (Betancourt et al., 2003).

Within the mental health field, recognition of the importance of culture has been much slower. Family therapy, which was rocked to its foundations by the feminist critique (Luepnitz, 1992; McGoldrick, Anderson, & Walsh, 1989; Wheeler, Avis, Miller, & Chaney, 1985), has been moving toward an awareness of the essential dimension of culture as well as gender. Unfortunately, most of the institutions in the field, such as the major training programs, the publications, and the professional organizations, still view ethnicity as an "add-on" to family therapy, a "special topic," rather than as basic to all discussion. Reactions to the upsurge in "diversity" presentations at the annual Family Therapy Academy meetings have included a frequently articulated request by members to "get back to basics." In our view there is no such thing as moving "back" to basics. Rather, we must re-envision the "basics" from more inclusive perspectives, so that the cultural underpinnings of all therapeutic endeavors will inform our work, allowing us to deal theoretically and clinically with all our clients (see the Appendix on cultural clinical assessment).

For many, the earlier editions of *Ethnicity and Family Therapy* provided an "ah ha!"—a recognition of their own cultural background or that of spouses, friends, or clients. Still, when it was first written, we were all fairly naive about the meaning of culture in our complex world. Some feared that our book reinforced cultural stereotypes, but we believed then, and believe now, that exploring cultural patterns and hypotheses is essential to all our clinical work.

We also recognize that ethnicity is not the only dimension of culture. In this book we illustrate how gender, socioeconomic status, geography, race, religion, and politics have influenced cultural groups in adapting to American life. Knowing that no single book could possibly provide clinicians with all they need to know to work with those who are culturally different, we gave the authors of the chapters the following instructions:

> We have become increasingly convinced that we learn about culture primarily not by learning the "facts" of another's culture, but rather by changing our attitude. Our underlying openness to those who are culturally different is the key to expanding our cultural understanding. Thus, cultural paradigms are useful to the extent that they help us recognize patterns we may have only vaguely sensed before. They can challenge our long-held beliefs about "the way things are." Thus, we ask you to write your chapter with the following aims in mind:
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> 1. Describe the particular characteristics and values of the group with some context of history, geography, politics, and economics as they are pertinent to understanding the patterns of the group.
> 2. Emphasize especially values and patterns that are relevant for therapy—those an uninformed therapist might be most likely to misunderstand (e.g, related to problems, help seeking, and what is seen as the "cure" when people are in trouble).
> 3. Describe patterns that relate to clinical situations, especially couple relationships; parent–child issues, sibling relationships, three-generational relationships; how families deal with loss, conflict, affection, homosexuality, and intermarriage.
> 4. Include relevant information on the impact of race, class and class change, religion, gender roles, sexual orientation, and migration experiences.
> 5. Offer guidelines for intervention to facilitate client well-being, demonstrating respect for both the historical circumstances and the current adaptive needs of families in the United States at the beginning of the 21st century.

Clinicians should never feel that, armed with a small chapter about another cultural group, they are adequately informed to do effective therapy. The chapters that follow are not intended as recipes for relating to other ethnic groups, which is far more influenced by respect, curiosity, and especially humility, than by "information." It has been said that some individuals are blessed with a certain magic that enables them to break down the natural reserve we all feel toward those of another language, another culture, another economic stratum. This is the blessing we wish to impart to our readers.

THE COMPLEXITY OF ETHNICITY

If we look carefully enough, each of us is a "hodgepodge." Developing cultural competence requires us to question the dominant values and explore the complexities of cultural identity. All of us are migrants, moving between our ancestors' traditions, the worlds we inhabit, and the world we will leave to those who come after us. The consciousness of ethnic identity varies greatly within groups and from one group to another. Many people in the United States grow up not even knowing their ethnicity or being descended from many different ethnic backgrounds. Our clinical work of healing may entail helping clients to locate themselves culturally so that they can overcome the sense of mystification, invalidation, or alienation that comes from not being able to feel culturally at home in our society. But everyone has a culture. As family therapists, we work to help clients clarify the multiple facets of their identity to increase their flexibility to adapt to America's multicultural society. We help them appreciate and value the complex web of connections within which their identities are formed and which cushion them as they move through life. Our clients' personal contexts are largely shaped by the ethnic cultures from which they have descended.

For most of us, finding out who we are means putting together a unique internal combination of cultural identities. Ethnicity is a continuous evolution. We are all always in a process of changing ethnic identity, incorporating ancestral influences while forging new and emerging group identities, in a complex interplay of members' relationships with each other and with outsiders. Every family's background is multicultural, and all marriages are, to a degree at least, cultural intermarriages. No two families share exactly the same cultural roots. Each of us belongs to many groups. We need to find a balance that allows us to validate the differences between us, while appreciating the common forces that bind us together, because the sense of belonging is vital to our identity. At the same time, the profound cultural differences between us must also be acknowledged. It is when the exclusion of others becomes primary to group identity that group identity becomes negative and dysfunctional, based on exclusion of others through moral superiority, such as White supremacy groups, or on elite social status, such as secret societies. The multiple parts of our cultural heritage often do not fit easily into the description of any one group. In addition, to define oneself as belonging to a single ethnic group, such as "Irish," "Anglo," "African American," is to greatly oversimplify matters, inasmuch as the process of cultural evolution never stands still. We are always evolving ethnically. We offer ourselves as illustrations:

Monica: My Irish ancestors had roots in Celtic tribes, who probably came from what is now Switzerland, and Viking communities in what is now Norway. My husband emigrated from Greece at age 19, his family having lived in Turkey for generations until the

Lydia: Our son speaks some Greek, but no Gaelic, and has had to struggle to put together the differences between Greek patriarchy and Irish matriarchal values.

Joe: My grandparents came from Italy—grandpa from Naples and grandma from Genoa. (Some would say that was a mixed marriage!) I married a Puerto Rican-Italian woman; my second wife's mother was Scots Irish, and her father was born in Holland of a Jewish mother and a Protestant father. I also have three grandchildren whose mother is African American with roots in the Baptist South.

Nydia: My ancestors were Spanish colonizers, African slaves, Corsicans, and Taino Indians who met in Borinquen, the island known today as Puerto Rico. I came with my interracial parents and brother to Columbus, Georgia, in 1956, for my father was in the U.S. Army. I married a second-generation Italian, and my two children identify themselves mainly as Puerto Rican. My grandson's mother is African American.

Each generational cohort also has a different "culture," shaped by the historical forces that defined it (the Depression, World War II, Vietnam, etc.), as do people of different geographic regions, urban and rural areas, socioeconomic contexts, and religious affiliations. Upper-middle-class Jewish families in Northeast cities, middle-class German and Scandinavian families on Midwestern farms, African Americans and Anglo families in small Southern towns, poor Mexican migrant farm workers in rural Texas, and Asian Indian and Iranian professionals in California suburbs all have had very different experiences. In addition, we are all being influenced by the "culture" of the Internet and television, which is replacing family and community relationships to an ever increasing extent.

So when we ask people to identify themselves ethnically, we are really asking them to oversimplify, to highlight a part of their identity in order to make certain themes of cultural continuity more apparent. We believe that ethnically respectful clinical work helps people to evolve a sense of whom they belong to. Thus, therapy involves helping people clarify their self-identities in relation to family, community, and their ancestors, while also adapting to changing circumstances as they move forward in time.

We need to go beyond many of our cultural labels and develop a more flexible language that allows people to define themselves in ways that more accurately reflect their heritage and cultural practices. Such labels as "minorities," "Blacks," and "Americans," and one of the more recent additions to our lexicon, "non-Hispanic Whites," reflect the biases embedded in our society's dominant beliefs. The term "minority" marginalizes groups whose heritage is not European. The term "Black" obliterates the ancestral roots of Americans of African heritage altogether and defines them only by their color. And the use of the term "American" to describe people of the United States makes invisible Canadians, Mexicans, and all other people of the Western Hemisphere. We might use the term "United Statesan," but we have instead claimed only for ourselves the descriptor for people of all the Americas. The term "non-Hispanic White" for people of European origin forces them to define themselves always in relation to "Hispanics." Hispanics are defined as a cultural group, although they thought of themselves as a racial group in the 2000 census, but were forced to define themselves by races that included Filipino and Romanian but not Hispanic or Latino.

Ethnicity is, indeed, a complex concept. Jewish ethnicity, for example, is a meaningful term to millions of people (Chapter 48). Yet it refers to people who have no single country of origin, no single language of origin, no single set of religious practices. Jews in the United States may come from Argentina, Russia, Greece, or Japan and have Ashkenazic roots. Or they may be Sephardic Jews from North Africa or Spain, who have

very different cultural traditions and migration patterns within the United States. There are similar difficulties with definitions of Arabs (Chapter 31), who may be Eastern Orthodox Syrians, Roman Catholic Lebanese (Chapter 34), or Turkish, Jordanian, Egyptian, or Palestinian Muslims (Chapter 35). There is, however, some sense of cultural connection between these groups. Moreover, the shared ethnic history of families of these backgrounds is not irrelevant to their adaptation in the United States.

We may feel negative toward, or proud and appreciative of, our cultural heritage, or we may be unaware of which cultural groups we even belong to. But our relationship to our cultural heritage will influence our well-being, as will our sense of our relationship to the dominant culture. People's sense of their ethnicity is affected by their relationship (unaware, negative, proud, appreciative) to the groups they come from, and their relationship (a sense of belonging, feeling like an outsider, or feeling inferior) to the dominant culture. Are we members of it? Are we "passing" as members? Do we feel like marginalized outsiders? Or are we outsiders who have so absorbed the dominant culture's norms and values that we do not even recognize that our internalized values reflect its members' prejudices and attempts to suppress cultural difference? Individuals should not have to suppress parts of themselves in order to "pass" for normal according to someone else's standards. Being "at home" means people having a sense of being at peace with who they really are, not being assigned to rigidly defined group identities, which strains people's basic loyalties. Maria Root (2003) has developed a "Bill of Rights" for racially mixed people, which includes the right

- to identify myself differently than strangers expect
- to identify myself differently than my parents identify me
- to identify myself differently than my brothers and sisters identify me
- to identify myself differently in different situations
- to create a vocabulary to communicate about being multiracial
- to change my identity over my lifetime and more than once
- to have loyalties and identify with more than one group of people

As family therapists, we believe in helping clients understand their ethnicity as a fluid, ever-changing aspect of who they are. Louise Erdrich (Erdrich & Dorris, 1991), has described the complexity this entails through one of her characters:

> I belong to the lost tribe of mixed bloods, that hodgepodge amalgam of hue and cry that defies easy placement. When the DNA of my various ancestors—Irish and Coeur d'Alene and Spanish and Navajo and God knows what else—combined to form me, the result was not some genteel indecipherable puree that comes from a Cuisinart. You know what they say on the side of the Bisquick box, under instructions for pancakes? Mix with fork. Leave lumps. That was me. There are advantages to not being this or that. You have a million stories, one for every occasion, and in a way they're all lies and in another way they're all true. When Indians say to me, "What are you?" I know exactly what they're asking and answer Coeur D'Alene. I don't add, "Between a quarter and a half," because that's information they don't require, first off—though it may come later if I screw up and they're looking for reasons why. If one of my Dartmouth colleagues wonders, "Where did you study?" I pick the best place, the hardest one to get into, in order to establish that I belong. If a stranger on the street questions where [my daughter] gets her light brown hair and dark skin, I say the Olde Sodde and let them figure it out. There are times when I control who I'll be, and times when I let other people decide. I'm

> not all anything, but I'm a little bit of a lot. My roots spread in every direction, and if I water one set of them more often than others, it's because they need it more. . . . I've read anthropological papers written about people like me. We're called marginal, as if we exist anywhere but on the center of the page. We're parked on the bleachers looking into the arena, never the main players, but there are bonuses to peripheral vision. Out beyond the normal bounds, you at least know where you're not. You escape the claustrophobia of belonging, and what you lack in security you gain by realizing—as those insiders never do—that security is an illusion. . . . "Caught between two worlds," is the way we're often characterized, but I'd put it differently. We are the catch. (pp. 166–167)

This brilliant expression of a multifaceted cultural identity, composed of complex heritages, illustrates the impact of one's social location on the need to highlight one or another aspect of one's cultural background in a given context, in response to others' projections. The illustration also points out what those who belong have to learn from those who are marginalized.

Most of us are somewhat ambivalent about our ethnic identification. But even those who appear indifferent to their ethnic background would be proud to be identified with their group in some situations and embarrassed or defensive in others. Those most exposed to prejudice and discrimination are most likely to internalize negative feelings about their ethnic identity. Often ethnicity becomes such a toxic issue that people do not even want to mention it, for fear of sounding prejudiced, even in situations where it is primary. Some families will hold onto their ethnic identification, becoming clannish or prejdiced in response to a perceived threat to their integrity. Others use ethnic identification to push for family loyalty. They might say: "If you do that, you're betraying the Jews." For other groups, for example, Scots, Irish, or French Canadians, such an emotional demand for ethnic loyalty would probably not hold much weight.

Awareness of ethnicity within a United States context is always associated with loss. In the case of the indigenous peoples of the Americas, their cultures were destroyed by the European immigrants or by the illnesses they brought, or they were uprooted and great efforts were made to destroy them, so the preservation of their ethnicities has been a profound struggle (Tataki, 2002; Zinn, 2003). Those who came from elsewhere came because of political or religious oppression in their original culture, economic need, or, as in the case of African Americans, enslavement. For many, the memories and associations with their own cultural group or homeland are fraught with pain for their ancestors or relatives left behind or for the plight of their group, which may lead them to distance themselves from this history and perhaps even hide it from their children and grandchildren.

Stuart Hall (1987) has said that every immigrant must face two classic questions: "Why are you here?" and "When are you going back home?"

> No migrant ever knows the answer to the second question until asked. Only then does she or he know that really, in the deep sense [he or she is] never going back. Migration is a one-way trip. There is no "home" to go back to. There never was. (p. 44)

What Hall is referring to is that those who come, especially from poor, war torn, or oppressive situations can never really go back, because the circumstances in the culture of origin remain devastating, but also because they will never again have the same relationship to the culture of origin they left; so the connection with their heritage necessarily

involves pain, and their homeland is a place where that pain often continues. Thus, connecting to one's ethnic roots has a different meaning, depending on the situation in the culture of origin. The Irish who are now 150 years away from the poverty and desperation that led to their migration may look to their ethnic roots with nostalgia and find in them a source of strength for their ancestors' courage, while feeling supported by our society's social institutions when they need assistance (Chapter 43). Immigrants of Latino origin rarely feel that their cultural values are supported by the community institutions on which they become dependent when in need. Their experience is often of ineffective, inadequate, and at times blatantly hostile, antifamily social service bureaucracies (Ortiz, Simmons, & Hinton, 1999; Chapter 11).

Given the harsh circumstances many immigrants face, and the painful, traumatic history they have left behind, it is not surprising that many people ignore or deny their ethnicity by changing their names and rejecting their families and social backgrounds, but they do so to the detriment of their sense of themselves. Those who have experienced the stigma of prejudice and racism may attempt to "pass" as members of the more highly valued majority culture. Groups that have experienced prejudice and discrimination, such as Jews, Latinos, Asians, and African Americans, may absorb the larger society's prejudice and become conflicted about their own identities, internalizing racial or ethnic hatred.

Family members may even turn against each other, with some trying to "pass" and others resenting them for doing so. Those who are close enough in appearance to the dominant group's characteristics may experience a sense of choice about what group to identify with, whereas others have no choice, because of their skin color or other physical characteristics. Examples of ethnic conflict include some group members' attempts to change their appearance through plastic surgery or other means to obtain "valued" characteristics. Families that are not of the dominant culture are always under pressure to give up their values and conform to the norms of the more powerful group. Intrafamily conflicts over the level of accommodation should be viewed not just as family conflicts, but also as reflecting explicit or implicit pressure from the dominant culture.

A few years ago Ann Fadiman wrote a book about the experience of a Hmong family in Merced, California, with the health care system, which may serve as a primary guide to cultural competence for family therapists and other health care professions. Fadiman (1997) shows how an understanding of culture challenges all our assumptions, beginning with our decisions on how far back in history we go to assess the presenting problem:

> If I were Hmong, I might feel that what happened when Lia Lee and her family encountered the American medical system could be understood fully only by beginning with the first beginning of the world. But since I am not Hmong, I will go back only a few hundred generations to the time when the Hmong were living in the river plains of north-central China. (p. 13)

Here, in two simple sentences, Fadiman expresses a most profound understanding of "cultural competence" as she refers to the astounding difference in worldview between the dominant culture's managed care values, whereby an impersonal health care professional is expected to do an assessment in 15 to 30 minutes, focusing almost exclusively on current symptoms, whereas the Hmong patient's framework includes a history going back a thousand years:

> For as long as it has been recorded, the history of the Hmong has been a marathon series of bloody scrimmages, punctuated by occasional periods of peace, though hardly any of plenty. Over and over again, the Hmong have responded to persecution and to pressures to assimilate by either fighting or migrating—a pattern that has been repeated so many times, in so many different eras and places, that it begins to seem almost a genetic trait, as inevitable in its recurrence as their straight hair or their short, sturdy stature. The Chinese viewed the Hmong as fearless, uncouth, and recalcitrant. . . . The Hmong never had any interest in ruling over the Chinese or anyone else; they wanted merely to be left alone, which, as their later history was also to illustrate, may be the most difficult request any minority can make of a majority culture. (p. 14)

Here too is a profound insight into cross-cultural understanding, demonstrating the main problem: how to see past our assumptions in order to understand the experience of others. The Lee family experienced repeated violations by well-meaning but ethnocentric health care personnel who saw this loving family as uncaring, abusive, negligent, and ignorant, only because the yardstick they used to measure the family's values and relationships was that of the dominant U.S. psychological theories. The health care system's unwitting imposition of its own values on this family shows us how limited our perspectives are, unless we add a cultural lens to our psychological assessments.

Sukey Waller, one of the few clinicians who managed to connect with the Lee family, demonstrated an amazing natural creativity as a culture broker:

> Psychological problems do not exist for the Hmong, because they do not distinguish between mental and physical illness. Everything is a spiritual problem. I've made a million errors. When I came here everyone said you can't touch people on the head, you can't talk to a man, you can't do this, you can't do that,' and I finally said, this is crazy! I can't be restricted like that! So I just threw it all out. Now I have only one rule. Before I do anything I ask, Is it okay? Because I'm an American woman and they don't expect me to act like a Hmong anyway, they usually give me plenty of leeway. (quoted in Fadiman, 1997, p. 95)

Waller's guidelines urge openness to others and reflect the certain knowledge that we will make mistakes. But the dominant culture makes it hard to open oneself to the possibility of mistakes, our only hope for increasing our learning about groups that are different.

In the 1990s, Robert McNamara, defense secretary during the Vietnam War, met with his Vietnamese counterpart of 30 years earlier. He reports that it was in that conversation that he for the first time understood the cultural misunderstanding between the United States and the Vietnamese. The United States viewed the Vietnamese as pawns of the Chinese communists in the Cold War. The Vietnamese leader said to McNamara:

> Haven't you ever read a history book? Don't you know we've been fighting the Chinese for 1,000 years? We saw you as coming to dominate us as everyone else always had and were willing to fight to the death. (Morris, 2002)

Here was a lesson in cultural humility that corresponds completely with the message of this book for family therapists: We must work to see the limitations of our own view so we can open our minds to the experience of others.

Cultural meanings may persist many generations after migration and after people have ceased to be aware of their heritage. Indeed, the suppression of their cultural history

may lead to cultural patterns they themselves fail to appreciate. They may perceive their behavior as resulting purely from intrapsychic or familial factors, when, in fact, it derives from hidden cultural history. Tom Hayden, co-founder of the Students for a Democratic Society in the early 1960s, a fourth-generation Irish American, who became a committed spokesperson for the power of the hidden cultural identity, discussed the experience of so many in our country who have had to live with their deepest cultural history denied:

> What price do we pay when those who pull the curtains of history allow us to know our history only dimly or with shame. [Ours is a] . . . story . . . of identity forever blurred by the winds of silence and the sands of amnesia. It is also a universal story of being rooted in uprootedness. . . . Themes of personal identity being threatened first with destruction and later by assimilation appear throughout our literature. . . . Themes that reverberate in each story are those of near destruction and survival, shame and guilt, the long fuse of unresolved anger, the recovery of pride and identity. (1998, pp. 8–9)

Hayden himself grew up experiencing himself as Catholic, but not Irish, thinking that he was "post-ethnic in an ethnic world," only to realize years later that he carried his suppressed ethnicity within:

> I had no historic rationale for why I was rebelling against my parents' achievement of respectability and middle-class comfort. There was no one teaching the Irish dimension of my radical discontent, in contrast to Jews and blacks who were instilled with values of their ancestors. . . . The Irish tradition . . . seemed more past than present, more sentimental than serious, more Catholic than political. (2001, pp. 68–69)

It was years until Hayden realized that his family had sought "respectability" as a way to "pass" for the dominant group. It had required his family, and indeed his whole cultural group, to appear to assimilate into the melting pot, but it had cost them their sense of who they were. Feeling himself an outsider in young adulthood, he joined the civil rights movement. His first task was to bring food to Black sharecroppers who had been evicted from their lands in Tennessee.

> Was it only coincidental that I responded to a crisis reminiscent of my evicted, starving Irish ancestors? So effective was the assimilation process that my parents couldn't comprehend why I would risk a career to prevent hunger, eviction and prejudice. I was Irish on the inside, though I couldn't name it at the time. (2001, p. 68)

Hayden grew up mystified about his identity. His father too was mystified about what made Tom do what he did, saying, "I don't know what influenced him when he went away, but it's not the way he was raised." Hayden's example illustrates the mystifying effect that attempts to deny or ignore cultural history have on people's sense of their own identity. Cultural competence requires not a cookbook approach to cultural differences, but an appreciation for the often hidden cultural aspects of our psychological, spiritual, and social selves, a profound respect for the limitations of our own cultural perspective, and an ability to deal respectfully with those whose values differ from our own.

Maya Angelou (1986), who, as a young African American, not surprisingly found it hard to feel culturally at home in the United States, went to live in Africa, hoping in some way to find home. What she found there was that who she was could not be encompassed by that important part of her heritage:

> If the heart of Africa still remained elusive, my search for it had brought me closer to understanding myself and other human beings. The ache for home lives in all of us, the safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned. It impels mighty ambitions and dangerous capers. . . . We shout in Baptist churches, wear yarmulkes and wigs and argue even the tiniest points in the Torah, or worship the sun and refuse to kill cows for the starving. Hoping that by doing these things, home will find us acceptable or that barring that, we will forget our awful yearning for it. (p. 196)

Those who try to assimilate at the price of forgetting their connections to their heritage are likely to have more problems than those who maintain their heritage. Simpson (1987) has said that:

> The United States, which has been called the home of the persecuted and the dispossessed, has been since its founding an asylum for emotional orphans. . . . Many who have assimilated by changing their names and forgoing their roots, have no way of estimating their spiritual loss. (pp. 221, 225)

We often see people in therapy who have become disconnected from their history and don't even know it, because belonging to your context is not a value in the dominant culture. When people are secure in their own identity, they tend to act with greater flexibility and openness to those of other cultural backgrounds. However, if people receive negative or distorted images of their ethnic group, they often develop a sense of inferiority, even self-hate, that can lead to aggressive behavior and discrimination toward outsiders.

STEREOTYPING

Although generalizing about groups has often been used to reinforce prejudices, one cannot discuss ethnic cultures without generalizing. The only alternative is to ignore this level of analysis of group patterns, which mystifies and disqualifies the experience of groups at the margins, perpetuating covert negative stereotyping, as does the failure to address culture explicitly in our everyday work. Yet many have eschewed the value of discussing ethnicity per se, considering socioeconomic, political, and religious influences more important. Others avoid discussion of group characteristics altogether, in favor of individual family patterns, maintaining, "I prefer to think of each family as unique" or "I prefer to think of family members as human beings rather than pigeonholing them in categories." Of course, we all prefer to be treated as unique human beings. But such assumptions prevent us from acknowledging the influence of cultural and group history on every person's experience. Some have the privilege to belong, with access to society's resources and the ability to trust that society's institutions will work for them. Others are disqualified by society at every turn, because they are judged not as human beings, but by particular group characteristics such as culture or race.

The values, beliefs, status, and privileges of families in our society are profoundly influenced by their socioeconomic and cultural location, making these issues essential to our clinical assessment and intervention. Discussing cultural generalizations or stereotypes is as important as discussing any other norms of behavior. Without some concept of norms, which are always cultural norms, we would have no compass for our clinical work at all.

OUR EVOLVING CONCEPT OF ETHNICITY

We live in the most ethnically diverse society that has ever existed on the planet and have struggled since its beginning over issues of ethnicity. It has not been only since September 11, 2001, and the massive reactivity against people from Middle Eastern and Asian Indian cultures that ethnicity has been a source of great conflict. Our nation was founded by people seeking change from their ancestors' cultures. But it was also built on conflict, prejudice, and attempts to oppress and destroy ethnic groups that were perceived as "other," even as we attempted to set up the most culturally tolerant society that had ever been imagined. Tataki (1993) states:

> Indians were already here, while blacks were forcibly transported to America, and Mexicans were initially enclosed by America's expanding border. The other groups came here as immigrants: for them, America represented liminality—a new world where they could pursue extravagant urges to do things they had thought beyond their capabilities. Like the land itself, they found themselves "betwixt and between all fixed points of classification." No longer fastened as fiercely to their old countries, they felt a stirring to become new people in a society still being defined and formed. (p. 6)

Conflicts between different groups in the United States have been built into our nation from the beginning. The Naturalization Law of 1790 restricted citizenship to Whites (Tataki, 1993). We attempted to destroy Native American cultures (see Chapters 2, 3, and 11), and we built into the interior of our governmental institutions, the dehumanization and disqualification of many cultural groups that had been brought here from Africa as slaves (see especially Chapters 5 and 6). When, only a few years after our own revolution, the slaves in Haiti fought for their freedom in a revolt very similar to our own, we saw them as dangerous and did everything we could to hinder it (see Chapter 9). The idea of "liberty and justice for all" was never more than an idea that we found impossible to truly believe. Benjamin Franklin, like so many of the founders of our democracy, owned slaves and advertised slave sales in his newspaper, though he later became president of the first abolition society. His ethnic prejudice extended also to Europeans. Dismayed by the mass immigration of Germans, he expressed fear that "this will in a few years become a German colony: Instead of their learning our language, we must learn theirs, or live as in a foreign country" (cited in Morgan, 2002, p. 77).

> Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a colony of Aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our Anglifying them, and will never adopt our language or customs, any more than they can acquire our complexion? Which leads me to add one remark: That the number of purely white people in the world is proportionably very small. All Africa is black or tawny. Asia chiefly tawny. America (exclusive of the new comers) wholly so. And in Europe, the Spaniards, Italians, French, Russians and Swedes are generally of what we call a swarthy complexion; as are the Germans also, the Saxons only excepted, who with the English make the principal body of white people on the face of the earth. I could wish their numbers were increased. And while we are, as I may call it, scouring our planet, by clearing America of woods, and so making this side of our globe reflect a brighter light to the eyes of inhabitants on Mars or Venus, why should we in the sight of superior beings, darken its people? Why increase the sons of Africa, by planting them in America, where we have so fair an opportunity, by excluding all blacks and tawnys, of increasing the

> lovely white and red? But perhaps I am partial to the complexion of my Country, for such kind of partiality is natural to Mankind. (1918, cited and discussed in Malcomson, 2000, p. 177)

Franklin's attitudes help us understand the pervasive yet unacknowledged way racism and prejudice have been embedded in our nation. Alexis de Tocqueville, the great 19th-century observer of American ethnic traits, found it striking how Whites were able to deprive Indians of their rights and exterminate them "with singular felicity, tranquility, legally, philanthropically, without shedding blood, and without violating a single great principle of morality in the eyes of the world." Tocqueville wryly remarked that no other people could destroy men with "more respect for the laws of humanity" (Tocqueville, 1835, reprinted 1945, pp. 352–353, cited in Tataki, 1993, p. 92).

Over the centuries we have greatly expanded the category of "White" cultures to include Europeans previously considered "ethnic," such as Poles, Italians, Irish, and Jews. People of mixed heritage are often pressed to identify with a single cultural group, rather than being free to claim the true complexity of their cultural heritage (Chapter 31; Root, 1992, 1996).

The majority group has often asserted its power through an assimilationist "melting pot" ideology, and we have remained ambivalent about the value of ethnic pluralism, as indicated also in recent attempts to roll back affirmative action, which have decreased the diversity of the college population even as the nation is becoming more diverse. Yet ethnicity remains a major form of group identification and a major determinant of our family patterns and belief systems. The American premise of equality required us to give primary allegiance to our national identity, fostering the myth of the melting pot—the notion that group distinctions between people should ultimately disappear. The idea that we were all equal led to pressure to see ourselves as all the same. But we have not "melted." Some have said that ethnicity, especially among European Americans, the only ones always free to become "American," is more symbolic than real (Alba, 1990). Indeed, some research on ethnicity lumps all European Americans together into one group. This book asserts a different view, that it will be a long while before ethnicity disappears as a factor relevant to understanding European Americans as well as other groups (Chapter 36).

The way our census counts people has always been a volatile issue in the United States. The reason is, said former bureau chief Kenneth Prewitt, that "throughout American history, starting with the 1790 Census, a classification of racial groups has been used to regulate relations among the races and to support discriminatory policies designed to protect the numerical and political supremacy of white Americans of European Ancestry" (Roberts, 2004, p. 143). In the 2000 census people were asked to identify themselves ethnically/racially and to list up to two ancestries. Some 7.6 million people nationwide answered simply "American" or "USA," and millions more left the question blank (Roberts, 2004). In our definition, however, everyone is ethnic, whether they choose to identify with their background or not. Not acknowledging our ethnic background is like not acknowledging our grandparents; it is a fact of identity over which we have no choice.

The 2000 census was the first to allow people to acknowledge mixed heritage at all, though it was done in a completely inadequate way. Many have feared that the reason was only that the United States is in need of further expansion of the category of "White," which will otherwise soon become a minority of the population. The cen-

sus, which has enormous power to determine the dominant cultural definitions of race and ethnicity, has severe limitations in its cultural categorizations. A glaring illustration is its definition of "White," which includes all those who have origins in Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. The term "Asian" is used to include a wide spectrum of groups, ranging from Hmong to Pakistani. Cultural groups from Middle Eastern countries such as Afghanistan or Iraq are classed as White, although they are much more closely related to cultural groups in Pakistan that we have labeled "Asian," making one wonder whose interests it serves to use the categorization "White" at all. The only ethnicity explored at all by the latest census was "Hispanic." This is a very problematic category (Chapter 11), which many consider racist, since it emphasizes the connection to Spain. It is so general that it is about as relevant as using "American" to describe people of so many heritages. Second, the census forced "Hispanics" to define themselves racially using categories that did not include Hispanic, Latino, or Native American. Their only choices were Black, White, American Indian, Asian, or Other, the last of which they generally saw as their only option. Furthermore, this categorization by the U.S. Census Bureau forced Brazilians (Chapter 12) to label themselves "White" rather than "Hispanic," even though the cultural history of Puerto Ricans (Chapter 18), Cubans (Chapter 15), Dominicans (Chapter 16), Colombians (Chapter 14), and other groups in Latin America (Chapter 13) undoubtedly have much more in common with Brazilian cultures than with "White" cultures.

The census has been a conservative force within our society for 200 years, putting people in categories that oversimplify their heritage and cultural connections to each other and to their ancestors. People have been pressed into racial categories that have no basis whatsoever except to stratify people by the meaningless difference of skin color. These categorizations have been developed to promote White supremacy in our society (Malcomson, 2000). Racial categorization was first articulated in Germany by Johann Blumenbach (Frederickson, 2002), an anatomist who divided the world into four racial categories by geography (Gould, 1994):

- The Caucasian variety for the light-skinned people of Europe and the adjacent parts of Asia and Africa.
- The Mongolian variety for the other inhabitants of Asia, including China and Japan.
- The Ethiopian variety for the dark-skinned people of Africa.
- The American variety for most native populations of the "New World."

In his second edition he added a fifth Malay category for the Polynesians and Melanesians of the Pacific and the aborigines of Australia. This clarified a hierarchy with White at the apex and the American variety on the way to the Mongolian extreme on one side, and, quite illogically, labeled the Malay as in the direction of the other extreme, the Ethiopian. Blumenbach's categories had no basis whatsoever in science. They were based on his judgment of the beauty of the people of the Caucasus! He said:

> I have taken the name of this variety from Mount Caucasus, both because its neighborhood, and especially its southern slope, produces the most beautiful race of men, I mean the Georgian, and because . . . in that region, if anywhere, it seems, we ought with greatest probability to place the autochthones (original forms) of mankind. (cited in Gould, 1994, p. 1)

During the 18th century, Europeans and Americans were in serious need of a categorization of races that would provide justification for Whites to treat people of color as not human. This was especially important at a time when, with the Enlightenment, there was a focus on the "inalienable" rights of human beings. Having a hierarchy of races helped rationalize slavery. This insidious categorization persists to this day and continues to promote White power because unlike the definition of ethnicity, U.S. official definitions of race have no scientific or historically cultural basis. Maria Root (1992, 1996, 2001), one of the prime researchers on ethnicity and multuculturalism, has defined a special bill of rights for people of mixed race, asserting their right to define themselves for themselves and not be limited by society's racial and ethnic stereotypes and caricatures.

THE CHANGING FACE OF ETHNICITY IN THE UNITED STATES AT THE START OF THE 21ST CENTURY

The late 20th century saw the greatest rise in immigration in 100 years. More than one million legal and undocumented immigrants came annually, most from Asia and Latin America. And although there has been a great upturn in negativity toward immigrants since September 11, 2001 (Gallup Organization, 2004), the 2000 census counted about 28 million first-generation immigrants in the United States, equaling 10% of the population—not the highest percentage of foreign born in the overall population, which occurred in 1907, when the percentage was 14% (Martinez, 2004). With streams of new immigrants imparting their unique cultures, American society has become characterized by unparalleled diversity. Asians, Latin Americans, and other newcomers have become "the new face of America."

Respect for ethnic diversity has flourished during certain periods in American history and has been stifled at others. The backlash against multiculturalism has also waxed and waned, depending on the economics and politics of the moment. Anti-Arab and Anti-Muslim feelings escalated to an extreme degree in the wake of September 11, 2001, and various governmental initiatives related to Homeland Security and the Patriot Act increased fear and negative feelings about certain nondominant groups in our society. White extremist skinheads and neo-Nazi groups periodically escalate their fostering of racial and ethnic hatred, and we experience periodic increases of anti-immigrant reactions, depending on the labor needs of the country.

The impact of ethnicity varies geographically. In the Pacific region, for example, one fifth of Americans are foreign born, whereas in the Midwestern farm belt, this is true of only one person in 50. In Los Angeles, 4 in 10 residents are foreign born; in New York, 3 in 10. Before the end of this century, White Americans will be a minority. In 1900, outside of the South, all states but Arizona had a population that was more than 90% White. Roberts (2004) reports that, by 2000, only 10 states had that ratio and 5 states beyond the South had a population that was less than 70% White. African Americans have increased to 12.3% of the population, with record-high proportions in the Northeast, Midwest, and West, and record lows in the South (Roberts, 2004). Latinos have increased dramatically to become 13.4%, in contrast to 9% in 1990, whereas Asians have increased to 3.6% of the population, one third of whom live in California. Only about 69% of Americans are "non-Hispanic Whites," a decrease of more than 6% in a decade, although fully one in 4 Americans believe they were descended from the Pilgrims!

However, this includes almost 50% of Hispanics who, as stated earlier, had no way t identify themselves in the 2000 census except as White, Black or "Other race." They could not identify themselves racially as "Hispanic." Of the 31 million foreign-born Americans, only 15% are European, 26% are Asian, and 51% are Latino. Thirty-three ancestry groups reported populations of over 1 million in 2000. The Arab population rose by 41% in the 1980s and by 38% in the 1990s, but still accounts for only 0.5% of the general population.

Concomitantly, there has been a rapid rise of multicultural consciousness in the United States. When Queens, New York, the most diverse county in the nation, launched its new telephone information line, it boasted providing service in 170 different languages (Roberts, 2004).

The changing ethnic demographics are having a significant impact on all aspects of our society. Of new workers entering the workforce, 80% are women, minorities, or new immigrants. In other words, our workforce is becoming culturally diverse in ways we never imagined. This reality in the context of a growing global economy and the presence of many international corporations helps explain the upsurge in business literature on managing a culturally diverse workforce (Jamieson & O'Mara, 1991, Thiederman, 1991; Thomas, 1991). Twenty percent of the nation's children have at least one foreign-born parent! The foreign-born population has increased to more than 31 million, making the United States now the least "American," by conventional definitions, or the most American it has ever been when we consider Latinos as Americans (Roberts, 2004). Twenty percent of schoolchildren speak a language other than English at home, mostly Spanish, although more than 150 languages are represented in America's schools (Roberts, 2004). Multicultural education, although controversial, is increasingly being included in school curricula (Banks, 1991).

FACTORS INFLUENCING ETHNICITY

Essential to understanding culture is learning about the interaction between ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, race, religion, geography, migration, and politics and how they have together influenced families in adapting to life in the United States. All these components are also influenced by the length of time since migration, a group's specific historical experience, and the degree of discrimination its members have experienced in this society. Generally, people move closer to the dominant value system the longer they remain in the United States and the more they rise in social class. Families that remain within an ethnic neighborhood, that work and socialize with members of their groups, and those whose religion reinforces ethnic values, will probably maintain their ethnicity longer than those who live in heterogeneous settings. When family members move from an ethnic enclave, even several generations after immigration, the stresses of adaptation are likely to be severe. The therapist should learn about the community's ethnic network and, where appropriate, encourage the rebuilding of social and informal connections through family visits, letters, or creating new networks.

Those who are systematically excluded from the dominant group, or from the groups to which they belong because of racism, anti-Semitism, sexism, homophobia, or other institutionalized bias, will continue to show the effects of this exclusion in their psychological and social makeup.

MIGRATION

> No one leaves his or her world without having been transfixed by its roots, or with a vacuum for a soul. We carry with us the memory of many fabrics, a self soaked in our history, our culture; a memory, sometimes scattered, sometimes sharp and clear, of the streets of our childhood.
>
> —FREIRE (1994, p. 32)

All Americans have experienced the complex stresses of migration. And the hidden effects of this history, especially when it goes unacknowledged, may linger for many generations. Families' migration experiences have a major influence on their cultural values. Why did the family migrate? What were they seeking (e.g., survival, adventure, wealth)? What were they leaving behind (e.g., religious or political persecution, or poverty)? An immigrating family's dreams and fears become part of its heritage. Parents' attitudes toward what came before and what lies ahead will have a profound impact on the expressed or tacit messages they transmit to their children. Families that have migrated before tend to adapt more easily, such as the Jews who migrated first to South America and later to the United States. Their previous migration probably taught them something about flexibility. Those who come as refugees, fleeing political persecution or the trauma of war and who have no possibility of returning to their homeland, may have very different adaptations to American life than those who come seeking economic advancement with the idea of returning to their homeland to retire. The political history surrounding migration may intensify cultural traits for a particular group, strengthening their tendency to hold onto cultural traits if they experienced the threat of cultural annihilation, as happened for Cubans, African Americans, Poles, Native Americans, and Jews, for example.

Adaptation is also affected by whether one family member has migrated alone or whether a large portion of the family, community, or nation has come together. Frequently, educated immigrants who come for professional opportunities move to places where there is no one with whom they can speak their native language or share family customs and rituals. Families that migrate alone usually have a greater need to adapt to the new situation, and their losses are often more hidden. On the other hand, when a number of families migrate together, as happened with the Scandinavians who settled in the Midwest (Chapter 46), they are often able to preserve much of their traditional heritage.

When members of a large part of a population or nation come together, as happened in the waves of Irish (Chapter 43), Polish (Chapter 54), Italian (Chapter 44), and Jewish migration (Chapter 48), discrimination against the group may be especially intense. The newest immigrants always pose a threat to those who came just before, who fear losing their tenuous economic security. Sometimes more recent immigrants of the same background have conflicts with their older compatriots because of class differences, as has been true for Cubans, Iranians, Poles, and other groups. Some groups have a back-and-forth pattern of migration, like Puerto Ricans and Mexicans, and are more transnational, meaning that they are always incorporating two cultures rather than only adjusting to the new one.

The East and West coasts, the entry points for most immigrants, are likely to have greater ethnic diversity and defined ethnic neighborhoods, and people in these areas are more often aware of ethnic differences. The ethnic neighborhood provides a temporary

cushion against the stresses of migration, which are likely to surface in the second generation. Those immigrant families that moved to an area where the population was relatively stable, for example, the South, generally had more trouble adjusting or were forced to assimilate very rapidly.

RACE AND RACISM

> Racial bars build a wall not only around . . . [people of color] but around white people as well, cramping their spirits and causing them to grow in distorted shapes.
>
> —BRADEN (1999, p. 24)

> Prejudice is a burden which confuses the past, threatens the future, and renders the present inaccessible.
>
> —ANGELOU (1986, p. 155)

> Race, reality and relationships are often complexly entangled in ways that are difficult to discern. The volatility of race as a phenomenon, the acute silence that often accompanies racial interactions, and the general lack of attention devoted to the intricacies of relationship development and maintenance all contribute to the difficulty of deconstructing this enganglement, which is a powerful and pervasive force in our personal lives and in our clinical practices.
>
> —HARDY (2004, p. 87)

Race, unlike culture, is not an internal issue, but rather a political issue, operating to privilege certain people at the expense of others. It is a bogus construct, created and kept in place by White people, and it creates walls that lock us all in. Ann Braden (1999), one of the White sheroes of the antiracism movement, puts it this way: Racism "is the assumption that everything should be run by white people for the benefit of white people" (p. 340). Unlike culture, which operates from the inside out, influencing us because it represents values that have been passed down to us through generations of our ancestors, race is a construct which imposes judgment on us from the outside in, based on nothing more than our color or physical features. Many who come to the United States are deeply troubled when they experience racism here for the first time. Over time reactions to our society's racism, which stratifies people by skin color, tends to be internalized. As Hardy (2004) puts it, "although seldom explicitly acknowledged, race is often one of the factors that determines who participates in certain interactions, and how" (p. 87). Expectations of privilege and entitlement or invalidation tend to become internalized assumptions in response to this social force. For people of color, race becomes "like the invisible fences that pet owners use to keep their dogs contained within a given circumscribed space. After a very short while, dogs learn where the boundaries are that should not be crossed unless they are willing to be shocked" (Hardy, 2004, p. 88). Race is an issue of political oppression, not a cultural or genetic issue. Ignatiev (1995) has said, "No biologist has ever been able to provide a satisfactory definition of 'race'—that is, a definition that includes all members of a given race and excludes all others." Categorizing people by race serves, rather, to justify reducing all members of one group to an undifferentiated social status, beneath that of all members of another group. Racism operates like sexism, a similar system of privilege and oppression, justified within the dominant society as a biological or cultural phenomenon, which functions systematically to advantage White members

ily and community, and thus in their own histories and cultural traditions (Aponte, 1994; Boyd-Franklin & Lockwood, 1999; Walsh, 1999; Walsh & Pryce, 2002).

For many ethnic groups, their religion has been a major force for transmitting their cultural heritage, even where, as with African Americans (Jones, 1993), Haitians (Chapter 9), Cubans (Chapter 15), Puerto Ricans (Chapter 18), and others, they had to hide their ancestral beliefs in a new religion. Many Latino groups, for example, maintained their earlier gods hidden in the guise of Catholic saints. Religion and cultural tradition have been largely intertwined, although there are cultural groups, such as Koreans (Chapter 26), that may practice very different religions (Buddhism, Methodism, Catholicism) even within the same family. Walsh (Walsh & Pryce, 2002) notes:

> Spirituality . . . like culture and ethnicity, involves streams of experience that flow through all aspects of life, from family heritage to personal belief systems, rituals and practices, and shared faith communities. Spiritual beliefs influence ways of dealing with adversity, the experience of pain and suffering and the meaning of symptoms. (p. 337)

Most Europeans share the dominant American Judeo-Christian belief in one God, and in the separation of church and state. Today, however, with the flood of new immigrants coming to the United States, other religions are making an impact on established religious institutions. Islam, the third great monotheistic faith, while expanding through immigration and African American conversions, will soon supplant Judaism as this country's third largest faith, including people of widely different ethnic backgrounds: African Americans with roots in the southern United States and Africa (Chapter 10), Pakistanis (Chapter 30), Asian Indian families (Chapters 28 and 29), Arab families from many different countries (Chapters 31 and 32), Albania, Turkey, and Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim nation (Chapter 24).

The Catholic Church, which has absorbed floods of immigrants, is particularly feeling the impact of the new immigration. Today mass is heard in 30 languages in New York City. Millions of Latinos with a fervent approach to worship are challenging the church hierarchy. The Catholic Church also has contingents of African immigrant families and African Americans, Filipinos, Latinos and others. These groups are also increasingly being attracted to the Pentecostal and Baptist faiths, creating new competition for the Catholic Church. Likewise, Koreans are changing the nature of both Protestant and Catholic church communities, with their evangelical zeal and religious traditionalism. And many Jews and former Catholics of European heritage are embracing Buddhism and altering the practice of this and other religious communities of Asian origin. Thus, the interaction between religion and ethnicity is profound, and it is essential to understand the interplay as one explores families' cultural contexts.

People use religion as a means of coping with stress or powerlessness, as well as for spiritual fulfillment and emotional support. Institutionalized religion also meets social needs. Unfortunately, clinicians often fail to utilize appropriate religious tenets and support systems that give comfort and meaning to the family (Hodge, 2001; Miller & Thoresen, 2003; Walsh, 1999). Given Americans' strong spiritual beliefs and their religious institutions' social service networks, it is surprising that many family therapists treat faith as a private affair that has little or no impact on treatment; we hope that this book will help clinicians appreciate that spiritual values are fundamental to healing for most of the cultural groups in the United States.

humility, and awareness of one's own cultural values and history will contribute to sensitive interviewing.

- Assume that clients from marginalized cultures have probably internalized society's prejudices about them and that those from dominant cultural groups have probably internalized assumptions about their own superiority and right to be privileged within our society.

Respectful clinical work involves helping people clarify their cultural identity and self-identity in relation to family, community, and their history, while also adapting to changing circumstances as they move through life.

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